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FM AMEMBASSY TIRANA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6587
INFO RUEHBW/AMEMBASSY BELGRADE PRIORITY 3036
RUEHHE/AMEMBASSY HELSINKI PRIORITY 0068
RUEHLJ/AMEMBASSY LJUBLJANA PRIORITY 0787
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RUEHSQ/AMEMBASSY SKOPJE PRIORITY 4468
RUEHVB/AMEMBASSY ZAGREB PRIORITY 3248
RUEHPS/USOFFICE PRISTINA PRIORITY 3729
RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO PRIORITY 3510
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 0749
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L TIRANA 000058

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DEPT FOR EUR/SCE, BELGRADE ALSO FOR PODGORICA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/22/2018

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [AL](#)

SUBJECT: ALBANIA WILL CONTINUE TO HELP KEEP PEACE IN KOSOVO

REF: STATE 6162

Classified By: AMB. J.L. WITHERS II, REASONS 1.4 (B), (D)

¶1. (C) As instructed reftel, Ambassador Withers on January 22 urged Albania's continued constructive and stabilizing role in the region with respect to the question of Kosovo's independence in separate meetings with Prime Minister Berisha and Foreign Minister Basha. He added that we are now entering an extremely critical phase and the U.S. is counting on Albania's help to minimize violence and publicly to advocate respect for minority rights during the upcoming transition period.

¶2. (C) Berisha promised to exert a positive and pacifying influence in his interactions with Kosovar interlocutors. A peaceful and stabilizing resolution of Kosovo's status, he declared, is in Albania's interest. He committed to continue working closely with the international community and the USG to reach an outcome acceptable to all parties. Basha was optimistic that the international community would find a way for Kosovo's northern provinces to maintain close ties with Belgrade without sacrificing Kosovo's territorial integrity. The ultimate goal, he maintained, is the integration of the northern provinces with Pristina in the near future without the use of force or violence. He and the PM said that President Topi's upcoming trip to Pristina would include speeches urging calm among all parties and respect for minority rights.

Comment

¶3. (C) The GOA has been a strong supporter of the U.S. and Contact Group position on Kosovo. The PM and his ministers have repeatedly stated publicly that the only feasible solution for Kosovo is the Athisaari plan and have traveled frequently to Kosovo to meet with Kosovar leaders and to urge restraint. We are confident that they will continue their support and moderating influence during the next few critical months.
WITHERS